

AMENDMENTS TO SPECIFICATION

Rewrite the paragraph beginning on page 8, line 2, as follows:

In the information recording/reproducing apparatus of the present invention, the test data examining unit may include: a data distinguishing unit categorizing an input data frame into a test frame including the test data and a data frame; a distribution computing unit computing a frequency distribution of values for the reproduction signals of the test data; a feature amount detection unit detecting a feature amount of the computed frequency distribution; a comparing unit deciding whether the test data is normal by comparing the detected feature amount with a prescribed value; and a memory unit storing the values of the reproduction signals of the test data. Furthermore, in the information recording/reproducing apparatus of the present invention, when the data distinguishing unit determines that the input data frame is the test frame, the waveform equalizing unit and the multi-level determining unit stop operating, the distribution computing unit starts computing the frequency distribution of the values for the reproduction signals of the test data, and the memory unit stores the test data. Another feature of the present invention is that the test data examining unit distinguishes (categorizes) input frame data into a test frame and a data frame, activates (initiates) the distribution computing unit when it distinguishes that the input frame data is the test frame, determines whether the test frame is normal by referring to a feature amount of the test frame, and if the test data is determined to be normal, the test data is output as effective data.

Rewrite the paragraph beginning on page 10, line 7, as follows:

With the present invention, waveform equalization according to the effective data stored in the memory and generation of the pattern table of multilevel data is [[only]] performed only when the test data is determined to be normal. Therefore, waveform equalization and output of multi-level data can be performed precisely.

Rewrite the paragraph starting on page 31, line 1, as follows:

In the foregoing embodiments, test data is not used again if the test data is determined to be abnormal. However, even in a case where the test data is determined to be abnormal, the same test data, for example, may be read out for a second time from the optical disk 1. In a case where the test data read out for the second time is determined to be normal, the cause for the abnormality could be a contingent noise rather than a defect in the optical disk 1. In a case where the test data read out for the second time is determined to be abnormal again, the optical disk 1 is likely to have a critical defect, and the test data on the optical disk 1 would, therefore, not be used.